NUMB. CXCVII.

The SPECTATOR.

Alter rixatur de lanâ ſæpe caprinâ,
Propugnat nugis armatus: ſcilicet, ut non
Sit mihi prima fides; & vere quod placet, ut non
Acriter elatrem, pretium ætas altera ſordet.
Ambigitur quid enim? Caſtor ſciat an Docilis plus,
Brunduſium Numici melius via ducat an Appi. Hor.

Tueſday, October 16. 1711.

EVERY Age a Man paſſes through, and Way of Life he engages in, has ſome particular Vice or Imperfection naturally cleaving to it, which it will require his niceſt to avoid. The ſeveral Weakneſſes to which Old Age, and Manhood are expoſed, have ince been ſet down by many both of the Poets loſophers; but I do not remember to have th any Author who has treated of thoſe ill Men are ſubject to, not ſo much by reaſon of rent Ages and Tempers, as the particular n or Buſineſs in which they were educated ght up.

the more ſurprized to find this Subject ſo ched on, ſince what I am here ſpeaking of pparent as not to eſcape the moſt vulgar Obn. The Buſineſs Men are chiefly converſant not only give a certain Caſt or Turn to inds, but is very often apparent in their outBehaviour, and ſome of the moſt indifferent of their Lives. It is this Air diffuſing it ſelf whole Man, which helps us to find out a at his firſt appearance: So that the moſt careObſerver fancies he can ſcarce be miſtaken in Carriage of a Seaman, or the Gaite of a Taylor. liberal Arts, though they may poſſibly have Effect on our External Mein and Behaviour, ſo deep an Impreſſion on the Mind, as is very to bend it wholly one way.

Mathematician will take little leſs than Deon in the moſt common Diſcourſe, and choolman is as great a Friend to Definitions yllogiſms. The Phyſician and Divine are oft to dictate in private Companies with the Authority which they exercile over their Paand Diſciples; while the Lawyer is putting and raiſing Matter for Diſputation out of eing that occurs.

may poſſibly ſome time or other animadvert large on the particular Fault each Profeſſimoſt infected with; but ſhall at preſent wholly my ſelf to the Cure of what I laſt mentioned, That Spirit of Strife and Contention in the verſations of Gentlemen of the Long Robe.

This is the more ordinary, becauſe theſe Gentlemaintaining Argument as their own proper Pro- and very often making ready Mony of it, it unſafe to yield before Company. They are in common Talk how zealouſly they could defend a Cauſe in Court, and therefore frequently forget to keep that Temper which is abſolutely requiſite to render Converſation pleaſant and inſtructive.

Captain SENTRY puſhes this matter ſo far, that I have heard him ſay, *He has known but few Pleaders that were tolerable Company.*

The Captain, who is a Man of good Senſe, but dry Converſation, was laſt Night giving me an Account of a Diſcourſe, in which he had lately been engaged with a young Wrangler in the Law. I was giving my Opinion, ſays the Captain, without apprehending any Debate that might ariſe from it, of a General's Behaviour in a Battel that was fought ſome Years before either the Templer or my ſelf were born. The young Lawyer immediately took me up, and by reaſoning above a Quarter of an Hour upon a Subject which I ſaw he underſtood nothing of, endeavoured to ſhew me that my Opinions were ill grounded. Upon which, ſays the Captain, to avoid any further Conteſts, I told him, that truly I had not conſider'd thoſe ſeveral Arguments which he had brought againſt me; and that there might be a great deal in them. Ay, but ſays my Antagoniſt, who would not let me eſcape ſo, there are ſeveral things to be urged in favour of your Opinion which you have omitted, and thereupon begun to ſhine on the other ſide of the Queſtion; upon this, ſays the Captain, I came over to my firſt Sentiments, and entirely acquieſced in his Reaſons for my ſo doing. Upon which the Templer again recovered his former Poſture, and confuted both himſelf and me a third time. In ſhort, ſays my Friend, I found he was reſolved to keep me at Swords length, and never let me cloſe with him, ſo that I had nothing left but to hold my Tongue, and give my Antagoniſt free leave to ſmile at his Victories, who I found, like *Hudibras, could ſtill change ſides, and ſtill confute.*

For my own part I have ever regarded our Inns of Court as Nurſeries of Stateſmen and Law-givers; which makes me often frequent that Part of the Town with great Pleaſure.

Upon my Calling in lately at one of the moſt noted *Temple* Coffee-houſes, I found the whole Room, which was full of young Students, divided into ſeveral Parties, each of which was deeply engaged in ſome Controverſie. The Management of the late Miniſtry was attacked, and defended, with great Vigour; and ſeveral Preliminaries to the Peace were

propoſed by ſome, and rejected by others; the Demoliſhing of *Dunkirk* was ſo eagerly inſiſted on, and ſo warmly controverted, as had like to have produced a Challenge. In ſhort, I obſerved that the Deſire of Victory, whetted with the little Prejudices of Party and Intereſt, generally carried the Argument to ſuch an height, as made the Diſputants inſenſibly conceive an Averſion towards each other, and part with the higheſt Diſſatisfaction on both ſides.

The managing an Argument handſomly being ſo nice a Point, and what I have ſeen ſo very few excell in, I ſhall here ſet down a few Rules on that Head, which, among other things, I gave in Writing to a young Kinſman of mine who had made ſo great a Proficiency in the Law, that he began to plead in Company upon every Subject that was ſtarted.

Having the entire Manuſcript by me, I may, perhaps, from time to time publiſh ſuch Parts of it as I ſhall think requiſite for the Inſtruction of the *Britiſh* Youth. What regards my preſent Purpoſe is as follows:

Avoid Diſputes as much as poſſible. In order to appear eaſie and well-bred in Converſation, you may aſſure your ſelf that it requires more Wit, as well as more good Humour, to improve than to contradict the Notions of another: But if you are at any time obliged to enter on an Argument, give your Reaſons with the utmoſt Coolneſs and Modeſty, two things which ſcarce ever fail of making an Impreſſion on the Hearers. Beſides, if you are neither Dogmatical, nor ſhew either by your Actions or Words, that you are full of your-ſelf, all will the more heartily rejoice at your Victory. Nay, ſhould you be pinched in your Argument, you may make your Retreat with a very good Grace: You were never poſitive, and are now glad to be better informed. This has made ſome approve the Socratical way of Reaſoning, where while you ſcarce affirm any thing, you can hardly be caught in an Abſurdity; and tho' poſſibly you are endeavouring to bring over another to your Opinion, which is firmly fix'd, you ſeem only to deſire Information from him.

In order to keep that Temper, which it is ſo difficult, and yet ſo neceſſary to preſerve, you may pleaſe to conſider that nothing can be more unjuſt or ridiculous than to be angry with another, becauſe he is not of your Opinion. The Intereſts, Education, and Means by which Men attain their Knowledge are ſo very different, that it is impoſſible they ſhould all think alike; and he has at leaſt as much Reaſon to be angry with you, as you with him. Sometimes to keep your ſelf cool, it may be of Service to ask your ſelf fairly, What might have been your Opinion, had you all the Biaſſes of Education and Intereſt, your Adverſary may poſſibly have? But if you contend for the Honour of Victory alone, you may lay down this as an Infallible Maxim, That you cannot make a more falſe Step, or give your Antagoniſts a greater Advantage over you, than by falling into a Paſſion.

When an Argument is over, how many weighty Reaſons does a Man recollect, which his Heat and Violence made him utterly forget?

It is yet more abſurd to be angry with a Man becauſe he does not apprehend the force of your Reaſons, or gives weak ones of his own. If you argue for Reputation, this makes your Victory the eaſier; he is certainly in all Reſpects an Object of your Pity rather than Anger; and if he cannot comprehend what you do, you ought to thank Nature for her Favours, who has given you ſo much the clearer Underſtanding.

You may pleaſe to add this Conſideration, That among your Equals no one values your Anger, which only preys upon its Maſter; and perhaps you may find it not very conſiſtent either with Prudence or your Eaſe, to puniſh your ſelf, whenever you meet with a Fool or a Knave.

Laſtly, If you propoſe to your ſelf the true End of Argument, which is Information, it may be a ſeaſonable Check to your Paſſion; for if you ſearch purely after Truth, 'twill be almoſt indifferent to you where you find it. I cannot in this Place omit an Obſervation which I have often made, namely, That nothing procures a Man more Eſteem and leſs Envy from the whole Company, than if he chuſes the Part of Moderator, without engaging directly on either ſide in a Diſpute. This gives him the Character of Impartial, furniſhes him with an Opportunity of Sifting things to the bottom, ſhewing his Judgment, and of ſometimes making handſome Compliments to each of the contending Parties.

I ſhall cloſe this Subject with giving you one Caution. When you have gained a Victory do not puſh it too far; 'tis ſufficient to let the Company and your Adverſary ſee 'tis in your Power, but that you are too generous to make uſe of it.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

By Her Majeſty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane this preſent Tueſday, being the 16th of October, will be preſented a Comedy call'd the Fair Quaker of Deal: or, The Humours of the Navy. The Part of the Fair Quaker by Mrs. Santlow, Comes [illegible] by Mr. Leigh, Beau Mizen by Mr. Pack, Cuxen Whiſtle-[illegible] Norris, Tom Cegg Boat-Swain's Mate by Mr. Johnſon, [illegible] mock by Mr. Pinkethman, Jack Locker by Mr. Bullock, [illegible] Whip-ſtaff by Mr. Bowen, Will Swabb by Mr. Burkhead, [illegible] Bucket by Mr. Bullock, Jun. Arabella by Mrs. Bradſhaw, [illegible] Worthy by Mr. Booth, Rovewell by Mr. Powell.

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